CLAUSE 1, ETC.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The question is:

"That clause 1, the Title and the Preamble stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Title and the Preamble were added to the Bill.

Motion to pass.

Sri R. M. PATIL (Minister for Municipal Administration).—Sir, I beg to move:

"That the City of Bangalore Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1966, as amended, be passed."

Mr. SPEAKER.—The question is:

"That the City of Bangalore Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 1966, as amended, be passed."

The motion was adopted.

Mr. SPEAKER.—Now, we go to the next Bill.

MYSORE IRRIGATION LEVY OF BETTERMENT CONTRIBUTION AND WATER RATE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1966.

Motion to consider.

Sri S. NIJALINGAPPA (Chief Minister).—Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Mysore Irrigation Levy of Betterment Contribution and Water rate (Amendment) Bill, 1966 be taken into consideration."

Mr. SPEAKER.—Motion moved:

"That the Mysore Irrigation Levy of Betterment Contribution and Water rate (Amendment) Bill, 1966 be taken into consideration."

Sri S. NIJALINGAPPA.—Sir, this is a very simple Bill and I am sure the whole House will accept it and that it is so will be borne out by the fact that not a single amendment is sent. That shows that this has the full approval of the House. In the original Bill, there was a sort of discrimination and the amount of betterment tax or levy was very high. That is why, Government felt that this distinction of minor, major and medium irrigation schemes may be done away with so that there may not be any legal difficulties later on.

5-00 P. M.

We have said that in the price of the land before the date of commencement of the construction, restoration, expansion or, alteration of the irrigation work, will be considered by the Committee and the price of the same land subsequent to the construction or improvment of a scheme will the considered. We do not want to take the entire difference. We want to reduce it to half the difference in the mraket value of the land. We are not anxious to tax him to the fullest extent because it might so happen that the price of the land might have gone up from Rs. 75 to Rs. 2,000 or 3,000. We want to put a limit and say that the tax shall not go beyond Rs. 300 per acre. That is the main purpose of this Bill.

Then we want to give the agriculturist some further reliefs. There may be some parts of the land which are Kharab and which cannot be cultivated. That portion is given exemption.

Then if any benefit has accrued as a result of the construction, improvement or restoration made by the agriculturist through his own efforts, then we want to give exemption for that part of his labour also as a result of which the value has improved.

Then in the case of construction, restoration or improvement of tanks which are not capable of irrigating more than 100 acres, this contribution will not be levied.

We have given all these facilities in this Bill and I hope it will be adopted without going through the usual formalities.

† SRI ANNA RAO GANAMUKHI.—Mr. Speaker, Sir, while welcoming this I find that the Government have not been able to collect betterment levy so far. I know some of the areas where even a single pie has not been collected since the beginning of the plans. I presume that the Government were faced with legal difficulties in the recovery of betterment tax. When the Act was first passed in 1957 it was expected that along with the Rules, the Act would come into force very soon and the areas benefited under the major, medium and minor irrigation schemes would be subjected to betterment levy and the tax would be collected very early. But what happened is that this Act has undergone changes successively. There was an amendment in 1961, another in 1964 and yet another in 1964 and now this is the latest amendment placed before us. I do not know whether any other amendment is going to come. Let us hope that this is the last amendment. We know that for major irrigation schemes amounts have been spent from general revenues. Even the people residing in areas which do not get any benefit from the irrigation schemes have also to contribute to general revenues. They are subjected to this tax because these irrigation schemes may be constructed for the benefit of the country. If the gestation period for these schemes is longer and if betterment levy is not collected in time I do not know what will happen to our financial position. It has become impossible for us to service our debts. Not only are we incurring debts after debts but it is also difficult to repay the debts falling due for repayment and we are asking the Government

(SRI ANNA RAO GANAMUKHI)

of India for more loans. This is the position to which we have come. I hope that after the passing of this Bill, the Government will take measures to collect betterment levy on the principles enunciated in this Bill. I know that in the previous amendment to the Act the levy was related to the increase in value of the land. Thereafter flat rate was inserted by another amendment and I do not know whether any one has gone to the High Court challenging this Act. I think that the previous amendment was defective on the ground that the rate was not related to the market value. That has been rectified according to this Bill. So I should like to say that this Bill is really welcome. Let Government take firm steps and collect the levy after the passing of this Bill.

We know that Mysore is very backward as far as irrigation benefits are concerned. We know that Madras has used every drop of water for irrigation and now the only thing left is to utilise the water of the sea for this purpose. We have not been able to utilise our waters to the full extent. We have no money for all this. There are many big works which are yet to be executed. We are requesting the Central Government to take over the schemes like the Upper Krishna Project so that they may be completed. I do not know whether the Centre is agreeable to this proposal. We require large sums of money for these projects. If we get a substantial amount I think, we will be able to go a step further and promote the interests of the State as far as irrigation is concerned. With these words I welcome this Bill.

†SRI SANJEEVANATH AIKALA (Surathkal).—Sir, I welcome this Bill. It is good that now the rate of betterment levy has been reduced to Rs. 300 from Rs. 500 per acre. Formerly the rate was Rs. 500 for major irrigation and medium irrigation schemes and Rs. 400 for minor irrigation schemes, but now the maximum has been reduced to Rs. 300 per acre and from that point of view this Bill has to be welcomed.

At the same time I must point out certain loop-holes in the irrigation works undertaken so far. Some of the works have been completed but the water available there could not be utilised for want of completion of the field channels or for want of acquisition of the lands required for purpose of laying the field channels. Especially in my district there is vast scope for small irrigation works, small anicuts, desilting of tanks and lift irrigation schemes. There are instances where water rates have been collected in spite of protest from the ryots. I believe, according to the amendments now before the House, the ryots of these places will certainly get exemption when the water from the anicuts could not be used because there is the provision that the Betterment Levy Officers can make certain enquiries and exempt such areas. So, it is certainly welcome from that point of view. With these few words, I welcome this amending Bill.

†SRI G. V. GOWDA.—Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is one measure which merits the expression of our sense of appreciation and gratitude to the

Government for having readily obliged to relieve to some extent the burden on the ryots under the original Act. If they had not brought forward and adopted Act VIII of 1964 this trouble would not have been there. In the original Act, 'contribution' was defined in a correct way, but by Act VIII of 1964 it was amended to include a basic contribution as well as a special benefit contribution. That was what has affected the ryots. Now it is a happy thing that it is proposed to delete the definition of the word 'contribution' and the ryots will be asked to pay only the basic contribution. It has also been reduced from Rs. 500 to 300 and exemption has also been given up to 100 acres.

Coming to the exploitation of the irrigation potention, the other day the Finance Minister in his speech said that 36 projects have been taken up from the inception of the First Plan and that Government now propose to take up 28 during the Fourth Plan. All these will cost Rs. 370 crores. By the end of the Third Plan they would have spent Rs. 90 to 100 crores. So, they require another Rs. 270 crores to complete these schemes and it is unfortunate that only Rs. 86 crores are earmarked for major and medium irrigation works during the Fourth Plan; it is not sufficient. We will not be in a position to complete even the schemes that have been taken up from the First, Second and Third Plans. Actually there will be no money available to take up new projects. I request the Chief Minister to see that more money is provided especially for medium irrigation schemes. There are 80 medium irrigation schemes that can be taken up in our State during the Fourth Plan. Unless the Chief Minister takes some interest to include and take them up in the Fourth Plan, it is difficult to exploit the potential especially so far as the medium projects are concerned. I do not know how the Finance Minister has said in his speech that Rs. 80 crores will be enough so far as medium and major irrigation schemes are concerned. The amount required for the spill-over works themselves cost nearly Rs. 160 crores. When that is so, how can we take up fresh works ? They have to make more provision especially for medium irrigation projects.

When Act VIII of 1964 was introduced, we vehemently opposed it because of the very far-reaching consequences it will have. Now I am thankful that the Government has realised those consequences and brought this Bill.

MR. SPEAKER.—The question is :—

That the Mysore Irrigation (Levy of Betterment Contribution and Water Rates) (Amendment) Bill, 1966 be taken into consideration.

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER.—The question is :

That clauses 2 to 6 both inclusive stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 6 both inclusive were added to the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The question is:

That clause 1, the Title and the preamble stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Title and they preamble were added to the Bill.

Motion to Pass.

Sri S. NIJALINGAPPA.—Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Mysore Irrigation (Levy of Betterment Contribution and Water Rates) (Amendment) Bill, 1966 be passed.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The question is:

"That the Mysore Irrigation (Levy of Betterment Contribution and Water Rates) (Amendment) Bill, 1966 be passed."

The motion was adopted.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. SPEAKER.—With regard to the clarifications on the statement made by the Food Minister, there are two ways of tackling it. Four or five questions may be put and there can be one reply to them. Or what shall we do?

HON'BLE MEMBERS.—We shall raise them during the General Discussion of the Budget.

Mr. SPEAKER.—The House will now rise to meet tomorrow at One of the Clock.

The House adjourned at Twenty Minutes past Five of the Clock to meet again at One of the Clock on Friday, the 4th March 1966.